

Manor Woods Valley – The Woodlands

Most of Manor Woods Valley is made up of many types and ages of woodland.

Old Manor Wood



Old Manor Wood is probably the same woodland referred to in the Domesday Book of 1088, meaning that this area of woodland is nearly 1000 years old, and probably even much more ancient. It was managed as standard and coppice woodland in order to produce Oaks for construction timber and ship building, and Hazel rods for making a variety of lighter products.



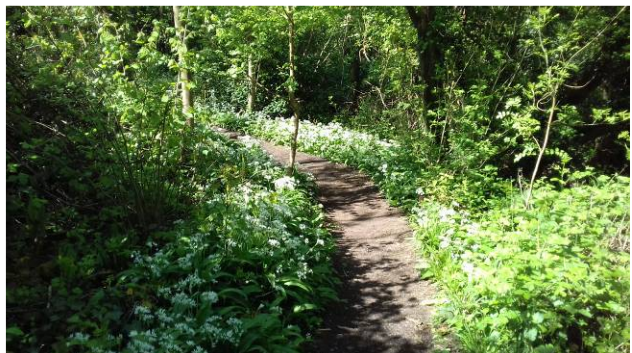
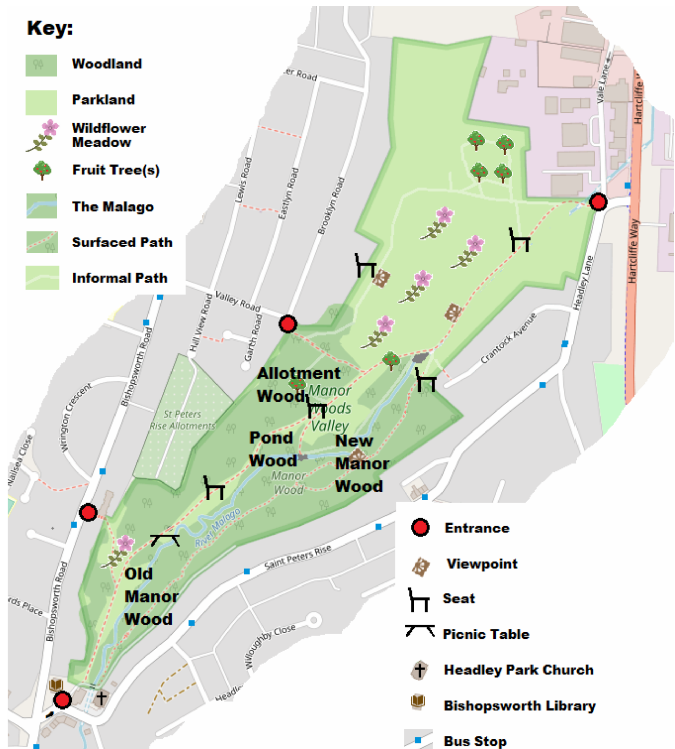
The woodland stopped being managed after the building of St Peters Rise in the 1930's. Without management, the Hazels have grown tall and dense, shading out most of the ground vegetation with the exception of Ivy, and Ramsons which flower in the spring then quickly die down.

A dip in the path near to the southwest entrance of Old Manor Wood is a World War Two bomb crater. Many of the Oaks have been burned at their bases as a result of vandalism that pre-dates the construction of the woodland path in the mid-2000's.

New Manor Wood

New Manor Wood was formed when farmland at the northeast end of the Old Manor Wood was isolated by the final phase of the housing development along St Peter's Rise, after the War, and the development of Crantock Avenue in the early 1960's.

After being abandoned, the farmland went through phases of rough grassland, to Bramble, to Hawthorn and Blackthorn scrub, then to the current, young woodland. As well as Hazel, there are occasional, young, Hollies and Yews, the seeds of which were probably brought in by birds. Patches of Currants, Gooseberries and Raspberries are likely



to be 'escapes' from nearby gardens. Ramsons and ferns have spread from the neighbouring ancient woodland.

'Ghosts' of the farmland's hedgerows are still present as lines of mature Hazels and Field Maples, and occasional Hawthorns, beside the woodland path, especially where the path divides in the centre of New Manor Wood.



Pond Wood

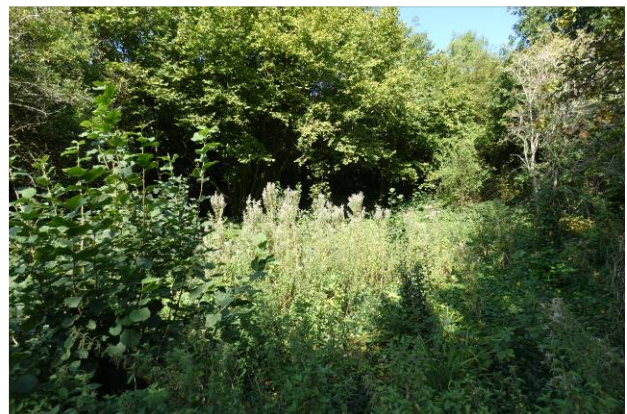
A relatively small area of Willow woodland, known as Pond Wood was formed as a silt-trap pond, made in 1976 by the dam, became filled by silt during the 1990's.

The Willow scrub was cut-down during the winter of 2009-2010 and re-grew as the damp verdant coppice woodland that we see now.

Allotment Wood

During the Second World War a large area of 'Dig for Victory' allotments was established on the southeast facing slope above the Malago. These allotments were gradually abandoned. By the early 1970's the area had become so overgrown with Brambles that any remaining allotment holders ceased trying to cultivate their plots.

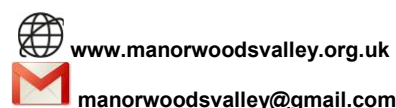
The area then became densely scrubbed over, before growing in to the young woodland that we see today. The woodland is dominated by Hawthorns, Blackthorns, Dog Wood and Hazel in the shrub layer with Field Maple, Ash and Sycamore trees growing up. There are a few immature Hollies and Yews. Hart's Tongue Fern, Broad Buckler Fern and Ivy grow here. A single large Apple tree is probably a relict of the allotments. The Apple is not a true variety, but may have grown from a rootstock.



Recently started, and ongoing, coppicing of areas within this woodland lets in light and encourages ground flora and encourages insects, bird and small mammals.

Manor Woods Valley's importance

Bristol declared a Climate Emergency in November 2018 and an ecological emergency in February 2019, and health and equality issues have come to the fore during 2020. Manor Woods Valley Group is working to ensure that Manor Woods Valley contributes to solutions to these issues.



November 2020